Giving and receiving critisism

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
SKILLS

for Scientific and Technical Professionals

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Introduction

- In normal day-to-day activities, engineers find themselves in circumstances requiring them to give corrective feedback or constructive criticism to others, or to receive similar messages concerning their own work

- So, you may have to adjust your delivery to minimize the negative reaction to the criticism. So, the receiver process the information in a positive, constructive way

Introduction

- Don't underestimate the negative reaction your criticisms create in others.
- Perhaps it's part of human nature to believe that when we offer critical comment and constructive criticisms to others, we are right in doing so, yet when they offer them to us, they are unreasonable, unfair, and misguided. When I do it to you . . .it's okay. When you do it to me, it's not!

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- Six recommendations that can be done to successfully deliver critical comment?
  - *Be Tactful*(لبق)
  - *Use Assertive*(حازم)*, Not Aggressive, Communication*
  - *identify the Positive*
  - *Depersonalize the Message*
  - *Provide Suggestions for Corrective Action*
  - *Don't Dwell* (يقيم)*on the Past*

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- Be tactful
  - *Dignity and respect should be maintained at all the times*
  - Do not become so focused on the content and intention of your message that you dismiss the importance of the emotional impact it will have on the receiver.
  - You do not have the right to be undignified or disrespectful just because you believe it is necessary.

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- Be tactful
  - Some take a great pride in claiming to be just "honest, straightforward people who tell it like it is."
  - Start with phrases such as "The only way I know how to say it is to lay it right on the line and tell you the truth" or" I'm going to tell you this for your own good."

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- Be tactful
  - Such communication should always be delivered in a private, nonthreatening, neutral location.
  - ***Never subject people to public embarrassment by confronting them in the presence of others.***
  - Your message will be meaningless as they react to defend themselves, and it is extremely difficult, or perhaps impossible, for them to agree in front of others.

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- *Use Assertive(حازم), Not Aggressive, Communication*
  - *Always avoid you-based messages when delivering critical comment. Use assertive I- and we-based messages*

Unacceptable	Acceptable
"You're wrong."	"I don't agree."
"I saw what you did, you violated our policy."	"Tell me what it means when our policies are disregarded."
"Why did you do this? You didn't give me what I asked for."	"Help me understand why it was done this way" or "Help me understand what happened."

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- ***identify the Positive***
  - It's a good model or guideline to make two positive statements before delivering the critical comment which means that
    - They are not subjected to criticism only.
    - It establishes the fact that you have a balanced view of them and their work
    - It encourages them to listen more actively. When people say positive things to you, the intensity of your listening increases and you pay greater attention to the content of their messages.

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- *identify the Positive*
  - Concluding with a positive observation ends the communication on a high note and encourages an overall positive reaction.
  - *Critical comment must always be positioned between positive statements. Stand-alone negative messages create a predictable and understandably defensive response in the receiver.*

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- **identify the Positive**
  - Giving positive comments is difficult some times if you think a lot about the critical part
  - Never use a shortage of time as an excuse for delivering negative- only messages. Your time constraints will not make their reaction any less damaging.
  - *Regardless of how big is the mistake people always have some thing good*

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- ***identify the Positive***
  - The positive observations must be specific statements (not generalized) and should be related to the topic you are going to discuss
  - Concluding with positive observations and optimistic statements helps to neutralize any negative emotional impact and discourages
  - ***Keep in mind, it takes no talent to deliver critical messages; it takes great talent to be able to deliver a critical message and have the receiver comprehend it, accept it, and demonstrate his or her willingness to respond in a positive way.***

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- Ex.
  - What is your reaction to negative messages

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- ***Depersonalize the Message***
  - assess your own emotional control at the moment before delivering a critical message
  - Diffuse the negative impact of your critical comments by first examining the true intent of your message
  - If your message is emotionally influenced and truly intended to punish, threaten, intimidate, or emphasize your brilliance or expose the receiver's stupidity, then you are not prepared to have an effective communication.

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- *Depersonalize the Message*
  - Wait until you are ready to deliver a positive message focused on correction and not critical message of negative judgment before you begin to communicate
  - *Avoid any comments that may be received as personal*
  - *Fix problems; do not assign blame*
  - *Focus on what happened, not on who did it.*

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- **Provide Suggestions for Corrective Action**
  - It's not enough to tell people what they have done wrong. Offer suggestions for corrective action.
  - *It does not take alot of talent to be a problem identifier; it is much more helpful to be a problem solver.*
  - Combining specific recommendations or identifying corrective options, along with critical comments, creates an inclusive, complete communication.

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- ***Don't Dwell on the Past***
  - *Critical comment or constructive criticisms should focus only on the present and the future.*
  - Avoid engaging in emotional discussions of past negative events. The past is past. It is gone, do not try to resurrect it
  - If negative events have happened in the past, structure your current comments to focus on avoiding any repeats in the future.

Packaging Your Criticisms Effectively

- ***Don't Dwell on the Past***
  - Practice the 90/10 critical communication rule: Critical comment or constructive criticisms should focus 90 percent on fixing future behavior, or what we will do differently next time, and only 10 percent on what has already taken place.

Assessment

1. Am I aware of the emotional impact my critical comments may have on the receiver of my message? (It is extremely beneficial to seek input from others to align your perceived awareness with their communication reality.)   *yes* ☐   *no* ☐

2. Do I give equal importance to the emotional impact and content of my messages?   *yes* ☐   *no* ☐

3. Do I realize the effectiveness of my communication lies in the receiver's actual reaction to the message and not in what I intended to say?   *yes* ☐   *no* ☐

4. Do I avoid an aggressive use of the word *you* in delivering critical comment?   *yes* ☐   *no* ☐

5. Do I use appropriate positive messages when delivering critical comments?   *yes* ☐   *no* ☐

6. Do I consistently deliver stand-alone positive messages to my peers, boss, and other critical communication points?
yes ☐   no ☐

7. Do I examine the true intent of my message before delivering critical comments?   yes ☐   no ☐

8. Do I consciously depersonalize negative messages?
yes ☐   no ☐

9. Do I avoid offering critical comment in public or other potentially embarrassing situations?   yes ☐   no ☐

10. Do I always keep my comments current and avoid any negative historical references in my critical comments?   yes ☐   no ☐

Any no-responses identify an opportunity to improve your communication effectiveness.

Receiving criticism

Introduction

- Receiving critical comments or negative feedback concerning our performance, behaviors, conclusions, or decisions is never a pleasant experience

- Developing this communication skill will contribute to improved performance, better working relationships, establish you as an exceptional engineer

- **Learn to manage yourself and do not allow others to exercise control over you by making it easy for them to push your buttons**.

The Value of Seeking Honest Feedback

- As difficult and frustrating as receiving critical comment from others can be, it is also some of the most valuable information you can ever receive.

- feedback from others is truly a gift they offer if we are willing to receive it

- Assuming that everything you do is perfect leaves no room for growth or improvement which serves to reduce the quality of work, inhibit growth, and stall careers.

The Value of Seeking Honest Feedback

- Reacting negatively to critical comment or constructive criticism is interpreted by others as immaturity and perceived to be hard evidence that you are incapable of evaluating your work objectively.
- You damage others' positive perceptions of you
- ***Consistently provide others the opportunity to offer constructive criticisms of your efforts.***

The Value of Seeking Honest Feedback

- Ask for feedback on those seven areas
  - The overall quality of your work
  - Your ability to control costs and address budget concerns and
  - Your ability to consistently meet deadlines
  - Your overall skills in critical thinking and problem solving
  - he quality of your decision making
  - he depth of your creativity
  - Your skill levels in personal organization; peoples skills such as constraints conflict resolution, customers service, working collaboratively; and communication

Separating Work from Self

- Criticism of your work may be interpreted as highly personal comments attacking integrity, intellect, or value

some guidelines for improving your ability to process criticism

- **Give Others Permission to Disagree with You**
- **Accept Critical Comment with a Commitment to Learn**
- **Lower the Stakes**
- **Depersonalize the Issue**
- **Seek Solutions.**
- **Listen for Accuracy, not Emotion**

Give Others Permission to Disagree with You

- Allowing others to have a viewpoint different from yours raises your tolerance and increases your ability to listen and process their input.

- Agreement or approval of your work is not an all-or-nothing proposition.

- *Repeatedly say to yourself; "Not everyone thinks as I do, and others have a right to see things their way."*

Communication Assessment

1. Do I seek honest, accurate feedback from others?
   yes ☐ *no* ☐

2. Do I allow others to disagree with me without judging their perceptions negatively? *yes* ☐ *no* ☐

3. Do I seize the critical comments of others as valuable learning opportunities? *yes* ☐ *no* ☐

4. Do I attempt to de-escalate the stakes in circumstances of disagreement? *yes* ☐ *no* ☐

5. Do I depersonalize critical comments and avoid taking criticisms of my work personally? *yes* ☐ *no* ☐

6. Am I able to separate myself from my work and view criticisms objectively?   yes ☐   no ☐
7. Do I seek the input of those who offer critical comments in the correction process?   yes ☐   no ☐
8. Do I listen unemotionally to critical comments?   yes ☐   no ☐

Any *no*-responses indicate opportunities to improve your communication effectiveness.

An Effective Model for Processing Critical Comments

- There are four specific steps you can take to process critical comments constructively.
  - Clarify
  - Acknowledge
  - Identify
  - Establish criteria